

# The day care model in Finland

Eija Koivuranta,  
Managing Director,  
The Family Federation of  
Finland  
Riga 9.8.2018



Väestöliitto



# Subjective right to day care

- Finland is globally famous for having pioneered every family's **subjective right to day care** in the 1990s
- Day care is regulated, professionalized, and heavily subsidized
- Day care is perceived as a key feature of the family-friendly welfare state
- Most children enrol in day care when 1-3 years old
- Day care is now understood as part of early childhood education



# Milestones

**1973**

**Day Care Act**, municipalities start providing day care, but shortage of places

**1990**

**Subjective right to day care** for all children below three years of age, extended in 1996 to all children below school age

**2015**

**Revised Day Care Act:**

**Act on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)**

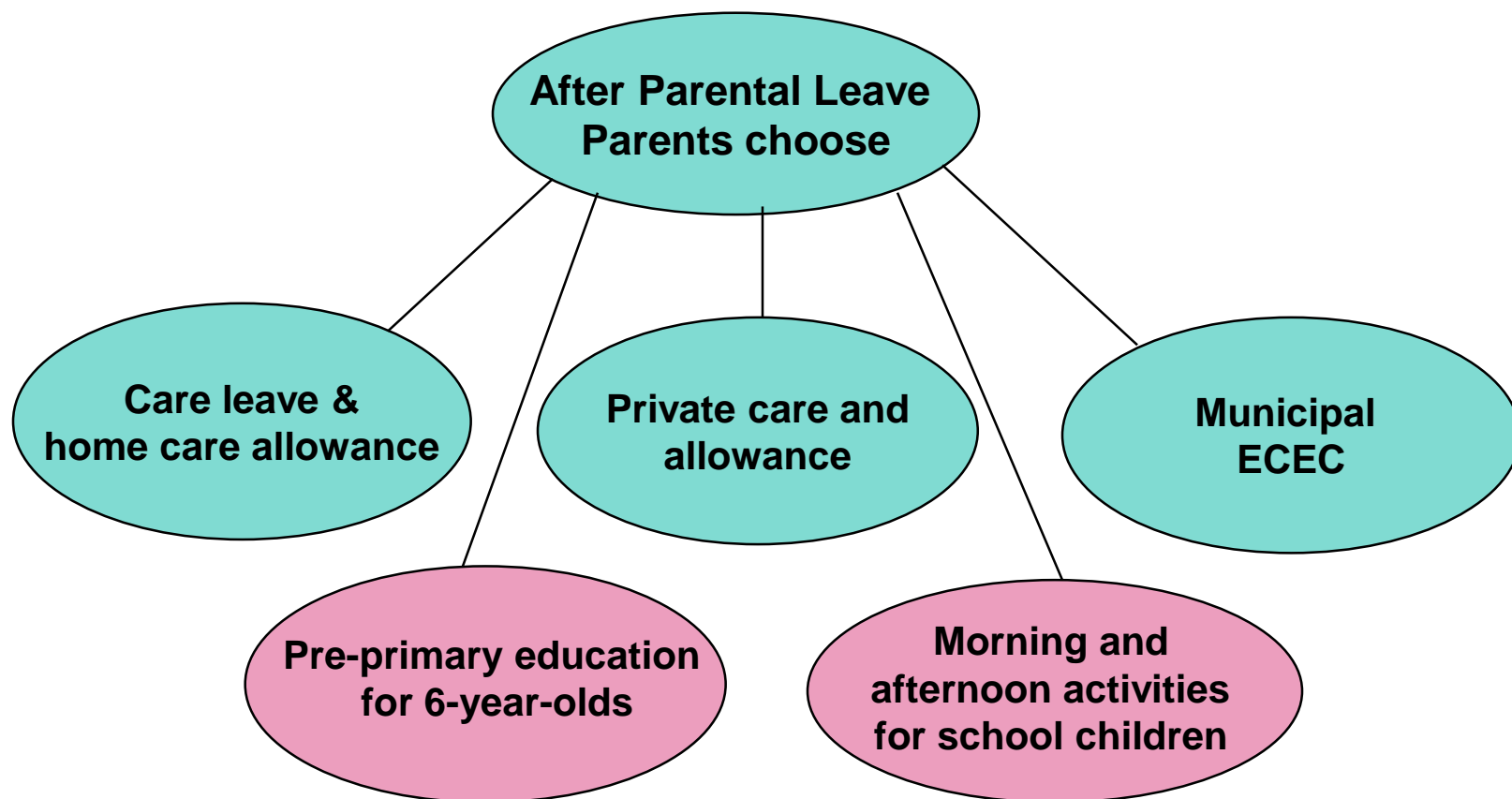
**2018**

**Revised Act on Early Childhood Education and Care will come into force from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2018;**



# Early Childhood Education and Care Alternatives

Ministry of Education and Culture





# Day care provision

**Finnish municipalities have a statutory duty to**

- **provide day care to children whose parents require it**
- **within 4 months from applying**
- **within a reasonable distance from the child's home.**

**Day care is provided in**

**municipal kindergartens (83%),  
family day-care (around 10 %),  
or in private institutions (7 %)**

**It can be full-time (up to 10 hours/day) or part time (5 hours/ day)**

**Evening, over-night and weekend care for provided children  
whose parents work shifts**



# Expenditure on day care

**Expenditure on early childhood education services:**

**2256 million € in 2015**

**this is 3.4 % of all *social protection expenditure***

**ECEC services form a third of total *social protection expenditure on families and children.***

**< 30 % of funding comes directly from the government**

**➤ 70 % of funding from municipalities.**



# Client fees

**Client fees: around 340 million € or 14 % of total costs**

**Fees vary by family size and income.**

- **The client fees for low and middle-income families were reduced and the sibling reduction was raised in 2018**

**Maximum fee 290 € / month, minimum fee 27 €/month**

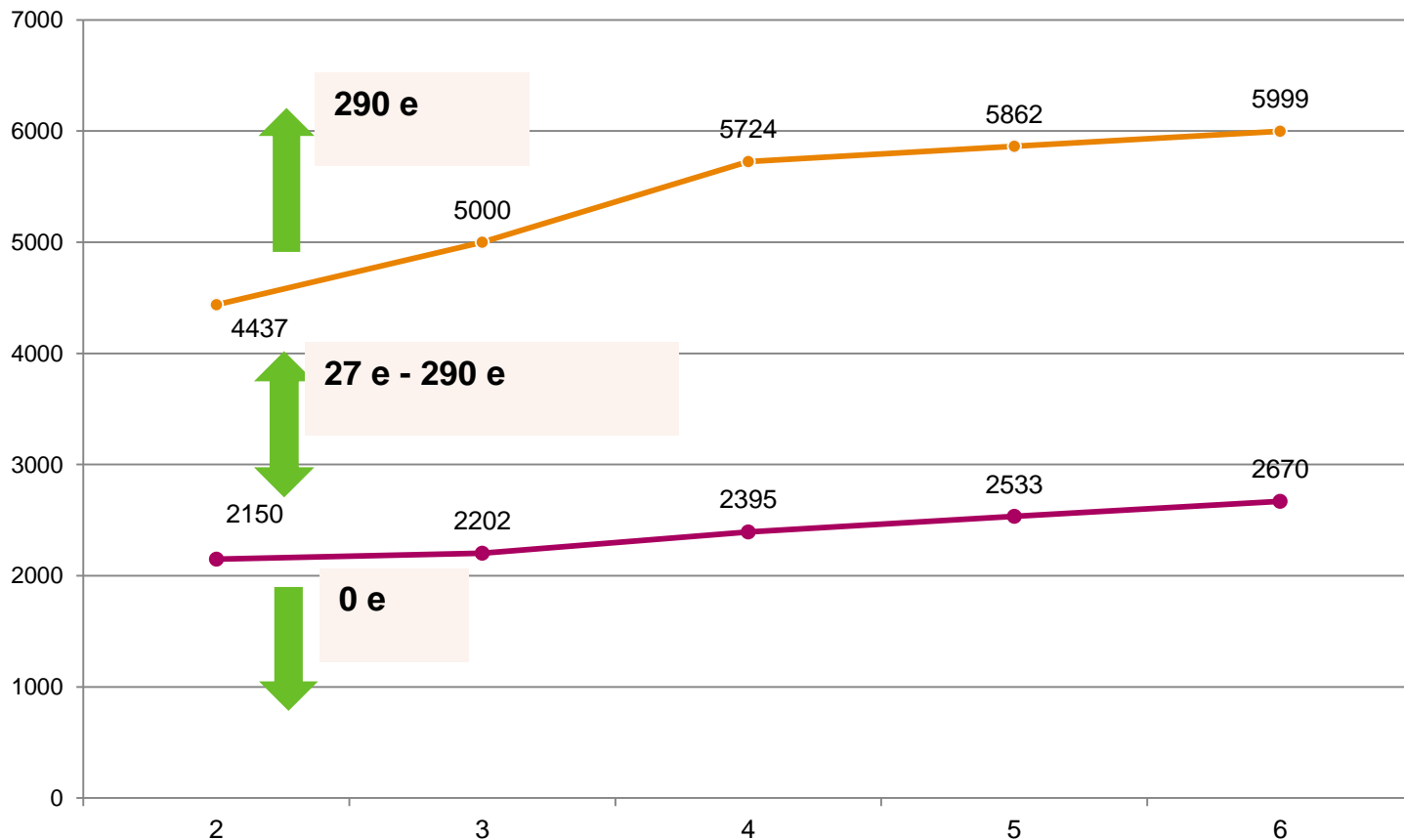
- **2<sup>nd</sup> child 50 % of 1<sup>st</sup> child fee**
- **3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> etc children 20 % of 1<sup>st</sup> child fee**

**Some families do not pay at all**

- **E.g. family size = 4 + family income < 2 395 €/month means no payments**



# Income limits for minimum and maximum fee for full-time day care by family size

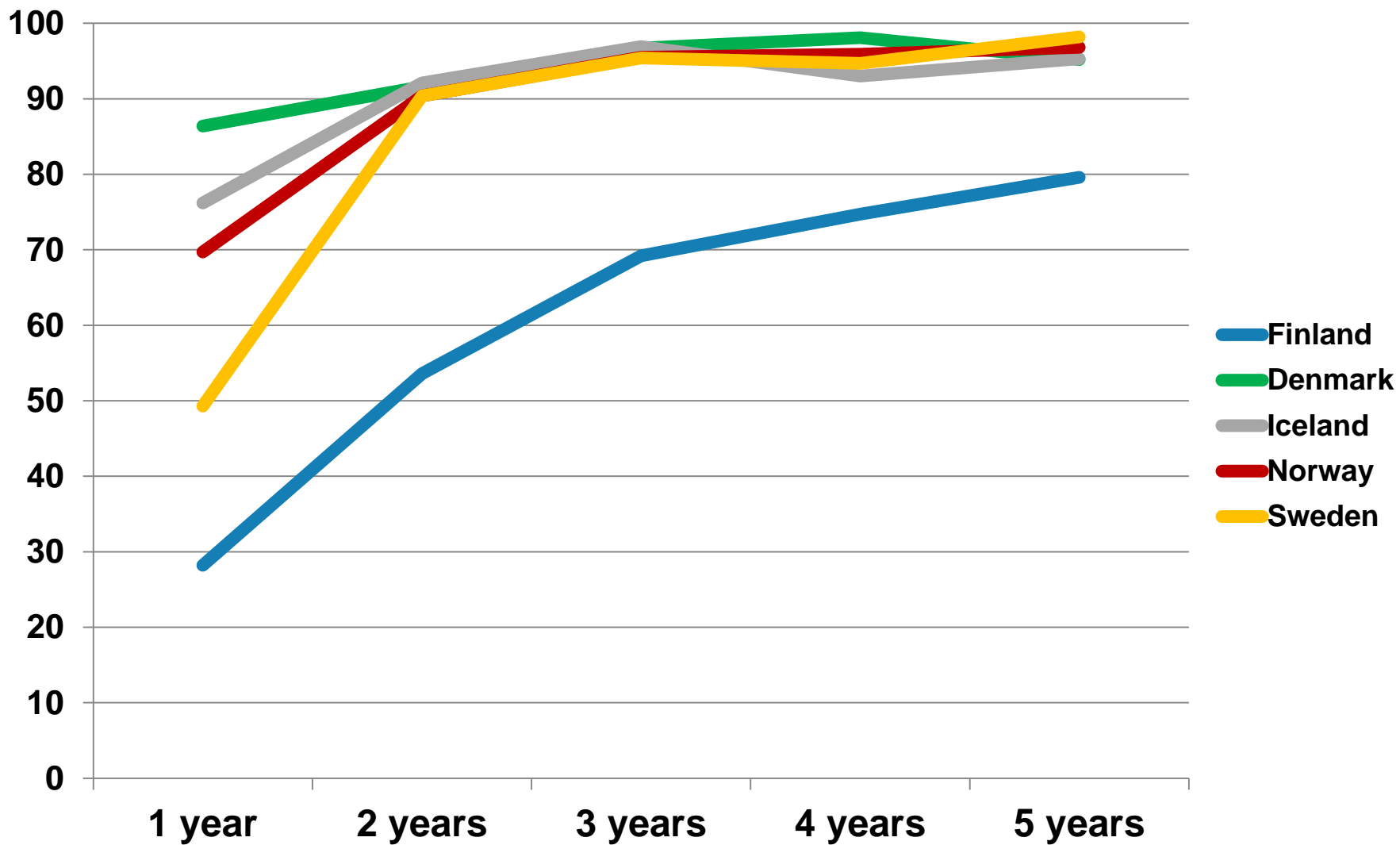


Source: Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities 2017.





# Proportion of children in day care in Nordic countries in 2015, % of age group





# Effects on child development

**Recent studies from Finland find that there is no negative effect of day care participation**

- **one study found some positive effects of day care participation on mastery of cognitive tasks when starting school**
- **another study found that children from disadvantaged families benefitted from enrolment in day care before they start school**

Hiilamo, H., Haataja, A., & Merikukka, M. (2015). *Children who do not attend day care: What are the implications for educational outcomes?*. FamiliesAndSocieties Working Paper Series 42 (2015)

Karhula, A., Erola, J., & Kilpi-Jakonen, E. (2017). Home sweet home? Long-term educational outcomes of childcare arrangements in Finland. *Childcare, Early Education and Social Inequality: An International Perspective*, 268

Kosonen T., & Huttunen, K. (2018) Kotihoidon tuen vaikutus lapsiin  
Palkansaajien tutkimuslaitos, Tutkimuksia 115, 2018.



# Future of day care in Finland

**New pedagogical emphasis in Early Childhood Education and Care Act:**

from “place to be when the parents work”

To “right of every child to receive early education”

**In line with the new view, national supervision of ECEC services was transferred from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to the **Ministry of Education and Culture in 2013****

**The **National Core Curriculum** guides the provision of ECEC services**



# Future of day care: child development

The new ECEC supports the **child's holistic growth, development, wellbeing and health.**

**It promotes lifelong learning as well as equity and equality, including equal quality of services in whole country**

**It also emphasizes children's role and participation of children and parents in ECEC**

**New personnel structure in 2030: 2/3 of the personnel will have university / university of applied sciences degree**

**Free ECEC for 20 hours for 5-years-old children –experiment in 2018-2020**

**Special Government Grant to Promote Equality to reinforce the resources of ECEC in socio-economically challenging areas in 2019**



**Väestöliitto**

**Thank you!**

**The Family Federation of Finland**

**[www.vaestoliitto.fi](http://www.vaestoliitto.fi)**

**for Hope, Happiness and Human rights**